2:Métraux--216 E-5 (1930-1931) 1935, 1936 SF24 Uru SF24
Carangas-
Chipaya

/337/

The Uro Language

(Chipaya Dialect) (2)

2. Gathered by the author during January-February 1931.

Introduction

My trip to Chipaya had as its basic goal saving the Uro language. Nothing was closer to my heart during my entire stay than collecting as complete documentation as possible on this dying language. My zeal was sustained by the conviction that I was certainly the last ethnographer who would have the chance to gather the last sounds of an undoubtedly very old speech. I must admit that the results did not come up to my efforts and that I am far from having obtained the documents which I hoped to collect. Nevertheless, if my dictionary and texts give only a partial ideal of Uro-Čipaya, this is because in 1931 it was already too late to collect the elements of this language which would have permitted an exhaustive study of it. If the fatidic twelfth hour of which the German ethnographers love to speak has not already sounded for the Uro language, I can assure you that its days are numbered. Its disappearance is a matter of only a few years. Nothing is more disappointing than being present at the death of a language. Every instant one is confronted by gaps, by holes filled by foreign elements which give the language the appearance of a patched cloth. One would like to reconstruct the missing pieces, one hunts for words and expressions, but this pursuit is for the most part in vain: the word has disappeared from the consciousness of all the individuals composing the group. However painful an investigation conducted under these /338/ conditions may be, it does not lessen the possibility of making some interesting observations on the way in which one language is substituted for another. Uro, as much in Chipaya as

/338 cont./

197 borrowings. When one sees conjunctions like "when" rendered by
192 the hybrid word culora (at what time), one is forced to admit that the influence of Spanish on Uro is old and has been exerted with particular strength. It is possible that these Indians formerly lived near Spanish establishments on the banks of the Desaguadero. One /339/ must also not forget that a number of Spanish elements have come to them by way of the Aymara. It is also through the Aymara that so many Kičua terms have crept into Uro, yet certain ones seem to have been transmitted to them through contact with groups speaking Kičua (ex: wata: "year"; wiri: "behind," etc. etc.)

124 The texts noted down very clearly illustrate this complete
191 disintegration of Uro: the purely Uro words are only wreckage which
197 float in the context. These accounts are not even the first flow from my informant, who dictated Aymara to me slightly colored with Uro, and it was only by insisting that I obtained a purer version. This method had the disadvantage of denaturing the account: my
● [128] speaker, forced to express himself in a language which had become somewhat unfamiliar to him, having a tendency to simplify or shorten his expressions.

126 The present state of Uro explains in part the insufficient number of texts collected. There is another reason for this gap in my documentation: the mental life of the Čipaya is so poor, their activities so few, that there is no material sufficiently rich among them to be the subject of somewhat extensive accounts. They have no myths at all, and one can hardly give this name to the few stories of Aymara origin that I was able, with great effort and expense, to gather during my stay among them. When I asked them to give me an account of their activities in Uro, they discharged this duty with a few phrases which effectively summarized their monotonous
115 activities. My investigation was made still more difficult by the apathy and stupidity of my informants, who were incapable of giving me a somewhat coherent narrative. There they were, stammering, obstinately stumbling, and passively refusing to understand what I wanted of them. This brutishness of the Čipaya was obvious to me

/339 cont./

115 with particular intensity during my last expedition when I was dealing with the Chaco tribes. There the stories and narratives spurt out, and the poor ethnographer is generally forced to stop the enthusiasm
124 of his interpreter in order not to be flooded. In Chipaya the obstacles that were set before me by the strangely narrow mentality of the Indians were augmented by the necessity in which I found myself of almost always having to use an Aymara interpreter. There is no
[97] Čipaya who speaks enough Spanish to act as drogman. I was almost always obliged to state my questions in Spanish and to have them translated into Aymara. As one can imagine, this system compli-
115 cated my task and increased the chances of error. However, I was well pleased with my Aymara interpreter, a young, very intelligent Indian who very quickly understood the nature of my work and was
126 an /340/ excellent assistant. I tried to avoid wrong constructions by
128 proceeding with constant rechecks. Practically all the words in this dictionary were noted down four or five times by me and obtained from different individuals after more or less long intervals. I had all the lists of words dictated by a native verified by submitting them to others, and almost always I had the Čipaya words that I had just transcribed retranslated into Aymara. Moreover, I always tried to make sure of the exact meaning of a word by having my informant use it in a phrase. The exactitude of my dictionary will be confirmed by a simple comparison with the Uro vocabulary collected in Ancoaqui six months later, when I did not have any of my notes taken in Chipaya before my eyes.

/340 cont./

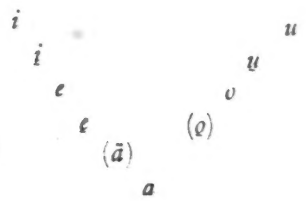
Phonetics

114
128
194

It is my duty to acknowledge at the head of this dictionary that for lack of a musical ear, I am not always sure of the accuracy of my phonetic transcriptions. I have done my best and I am convinced that on the whole my notations are correct. I fear, however, that I have created some confusion in the quality of the vowels, and it is probable that certain fine points or shadings of pronunciation have escaped me. The difficulties I experienced in gathering and reproducing Čipaya and Uro sounds made me neglect the question of accent. I insist on pointing out this serious gap myself in my linguistic documentation.

194

The vowels which I believe to have recognized in Čipaya can be classified in the following manner:



a, e, i, o u are "grosso modo" identical to the corresponding sounds in Spanish

i is a phoneme whose quality is midway between a very open i and a closed e

ɛ is a more open e than the French è in "père." It is almost a very closed front a

Carangas-
Chipaya

/341/

194
128
114

I think that I have ascertained in some cases the existence of an o (o̯) whose articulation would be close to a gutteral (back) a. Not being sure of this sound, and having ascertained it only in a few very rare cases, I have not indicated it in my transcriptions.

u is a phoneme midway between an open u and a closed o.

The dipthongs are the following: au̯, eu̯, ua̯, (wa), ue̯ (we).

The sign ˘ put under the first or second vowel indicates that the latter is asyllabic and is only a semivowel. When the second part of the diphtong precedes another vowel, it is replaced by the corresponding fricative.

Table of Consonants

	Occlusives		Affricates		Constringents		Liquids		
Aspirated	*h*								
Guttural (medio gut.)	*k*	*g*	*k*		*x*				
Palatal			*č*	*j*	*š*	*ž*		*l'*	*ñ*
Dental	*t* (*tʰ*)		*ts*		*s*	(*z*)	*r*	*l*	*n*
Labial	*p* (*pʰ*)					*w*			

The sound transcribed by h is strongly aspirated; it tends toward x.

g, k, l, m, n, ñ, l, p, r, s, t are identical with the corresponding sounds in Spanish or French.

č = "ch" in Spanish.

š = "ch" in French.

ž = French "j" in "jeter."

/341 cont./

194 ɟ = English "j," dj in French.

t^{s} = an affricate generally transcribed ts.

w = "w" in English ("water").

l' = a liquid "l" as in Spanish. It is possible that I may have sometimes mixed it up with y.

p^{h} = a p, followed by a light breath. /342/

k^{x} = (I do not think I am in error) a medio-guttural affricate, a very frequent sound in Čipaya.

Grammar

193 The few rules of grammar which can be deduced from the texts I collected will appear in the reading itself of this dictionary. I must point out, however, the existence of a sort of suffixed article, ki, frequently added to substantives: kerka: armadillo; kerkaki: the armadillo; k^{x}oya: house; k^{x}oyaki: the house, etc.

Gender exists in Čipaya; it manifests itself in some words, in the first place in the demonstrative adjective ti for the masculine and ta for the feminine, and in the ordinal adjective "a" tsi, tsa.

The masculine gender is indicated in certain cases by the presence of an a: usa (male child, boy); us (female child, little girl); sewa: widower; seu: widow, etc.

Vocabulary

Preliminary remarks

128 192 I have indicated the root for each verb, which I tried to disengage from the different forms which were given me by my informants. In doubtful cases I have left the burden of decision to the reader. The verbs for which I had only one example have been written down such as they are.

/342 cont./

128
192

As I have already had the occasion to say, words of foreign origin are marked with an asterisk: * for Aymara, ** for Spanish, and *** for Kičua.

Words common to both Aymara and Kičua have been considered as borrowings from the former language. Words of hybrid composition have been separated by a hyphen mark. Asterisks indicate the provenance of the foreign element.

When words with different roots correspond to a single idea, they are enumerated one after another if the number of instances is limited, and separated in paragraphs if they are numerous.

Every word the translation of which is doubtful has been followed by a question mark. /The word list, pp. 342-387, the texts, pp. 387-393, and the bibliography, pp. 393-394, have been omitted in the translation; see the foreign text./

/147 cont./

114 this group are the handsome monograph of Créqui-Montfort and Rivet, Métraux's vocabulary, and, at a less important level, the various publications of Posnansky containing numerous words more or less well noted down and translated.

The conditions under which most of the documents on the Iru-Itu group were obtained largely explain the imprecision of the meaning of numerous words and the often very different notation on which Créqui-Montfort and Rivet rightly insist.

195 There is no doubt, however, that many of the words have a very broad meaning and that their pronunciation varies within rather large limits, especially with informants belonging to different generations, or influenced to varying extents by Aymara. One even notes considerable variations in the course of a conversation with one person.

126 During my long contact with the Uru, I collected an important vocabulary of more than 1,000 words, as well as numerous phrases making it possible to analyze the structure of the language.

●128 The extent of this vocabulary and of the collection of phrases makes it impossible to publish them now. I have therefore been forced to make a selection of accounts and conver-

121 sations obtained from my informants. These texts /148/ relate to the daily life of the Uru. Beyond their interest in this respect, they illustrate most of the ordinary grammatical forms. Study of them also permits a comparison with the only known Pukina text, that of Oré, which is much more extended than it had been possible to do with the documents at our disposal up to now. This comparison, which gives evidence of very close grammatical and lexicographic affinities, will be the subject of a special note in the second number of this journal.

115 Two informants were utilized in the course of our long

[195] linguistic investigation. They belonged to two different generations and displayed considerable variations, not only in

[191] phonetics but also in vocabulary and syntax. Both spoke Aymara, the younger one fluently, and the older rather badly;

/149 cont./

115 large part, and this to the great dismay of the respectable
[147] guardian of the ruins of Tiahuanaco who had accompanied him to La Paz and whose watchfulness he tricked in order to enter
[191] his village alone. A very limited knowledge of Aymara, none of Spanish or Kešwa /Quechua/. An excellent informant.

Carlos Kispe, from 40 to 50 years old, one of the youngest
[144] men in the group. He displayed characteristics in his physical appearance which led one to suspect a certain degree of Aymara
[848] crossbreeding (see the 2nd note, on Physical Anthropology /p. 30/). Besides he was an illegitimate son, born of an un-
[191] known father. Much more enterprising than Manuel Inta, he spoke Aymara fluently, but neither Spanish nor Kešwa. He had frequent contacts with the neighboring Aymara populations and, faced with the persistant drought, was thinking of leaving
[191] Iru-Iru to go live as a fisher at Guaki. He also proved to be an excellent informant, but his syntax was less pure and less varied than that of Manuel Inta and his vocabulary poorer and more mixed with Aymara; he did not use, or even did not know, a certain number of words used by his companion.

195 It is interesting to underline these differences in /150/
184 language between individuals of the same village, belonging to two different generations. They allow us to follow the rapid evolution of languages entrusted to oral tradition alone without any monument to establish them.

115 Outside these two principal informants, we utilized other inhabitants of the village, either for the general investigation or for word comparisons

128 For each text we shall indicate the informant who pro-
191 vided it. These texts were gone over several times with the informant in order to obtain as exact a transcription as possible. Their translation was always checked in Aymara. Even so, in the course of the same text, considerable variations in pronunciation will be observed, which do not appear to follow any definite rule. They indicate a certain phonetic instability, more marked, of course, between different observers.

/193 cont./

162 Besides these 21 subjects, who considered themselves as pure Uru, three Aymara women living with some Urus had settled in the village with five children.

829 The concept of pure Uru is completely arbitrary;
597 its value is more social than racial. At all times adoption in
648 various forms made the incorporation of a subject of another origin into the group possible, and he was from then on con-
[128] sidered a true Uru. This was the case with an Aymara child, whom we, of course, dropped from our list.

829 Children of an Uru mother and an unknown father were considered pure Uru.

One of our informants, Carlos Kispe, was himself, as we have seen, a "without father." Although considered an Uru, all his physical and mental characteristics clearly distinguished him from the other members of the group.

The Uru considered Aymara women born in neighboring villages and their children, even if born of Uru fathers, as foreigners. This matrilineal law is interesting to note.

126 Aymara women refused to let themselves or their children be examined. Nothing could persuade the two old Uru women.

We were hence reduced to the nine following subjects:

Men

142 Manuel Inta. An old patriarch 80 to 90 years old, born of Uru father and mother. White, rather thick hair; beard reduced to a few short hairs, entirely white. Thin lips; a straight-nosed profile. No Mongolian fold, /194/ but the presence of a malo-marginal fold, very distinct, on the far part of the eyelid.
[163] Four living sons, Tomas and three others who have left the village; three daughters, among them Andréa and Célestina, and four dead children.

Tomas Inta, 50 to 60 years old, Manuel's son. Considered pure Uru. No white hair. Thin lips, straight nose. Very marked malo-marginal fold.

was represented only by Carlos and his son. Two men, a young woman, and her children formed the Vila group. The Inta family was the only still rather numerous one. It has, moreover, always been considered the most traditional and purest of the Iru-Itu families.

Anthropometric Study

We had to limit our study to the essential measurements of the head and body.

The results obtained are contained in Tables I and II and the indices calculated in Table III /see pp. 38-40/.

These figures call for some comments.

In spite of the small number of subjects examined, the results are rather homogeneous for the group of men, with the exception of Carlos Kispe who is considerably far from the general type. The group of women presents marked differences from that of the men. It is quite difficult to judge to what extent these differences are due to a pronounced sexual dimorphism or to the influence of possible crossbreeding, which makes itself felt among close relatives, two sisters and their female cousin.

We will study the male and female groups separately.

Head

The absolute measurements show a notably elongated head for all the subjects examined; the outside figures go from 187 to 210 for the men and from 178 to 180 for the women. The head is narrow among the men, 141 to 150, with the exception of Carlos Kispe; among the women the absolute values do not exceed 149.

The cephalic index does not exceed 75.0 for the masculine groups; only Carlos Kispe is hyperbrachycephalic

/207 cont./

143 Kline: ++

[164] We shall only conclude from this isolated observation /208/ the existence of possible heredosyphilis or of a very attenuated syphilis in one of the most conservative members of the group, who always severely condemned sexual relations with other natives as being against the traditions.

• 128 These few isolated examinations have no great significance; they do emphasize however the interest which a numerous series of hematological and serological investigations among the isolated native groups of the Cordillera or the South American forests would have.

Conclusion

141 [128] In spite of the small number of subjects examined (9), owing to the rapid decline of the group and its approaching extinction, this study of the last Uru of Iru-Itu permits us to make a few interesting conclusions.

[171] Height varies little from that of the neighboring Andean populations, and small and medium stature predominate. The population is as a whole macroskelic.

The cephalic index among the men who can be considered as not crossbred with the neighboring populations is lower than 75.0% (average: 73.51). Three women are moderately brachycephalic; we must note that they are closely related.

Dolichocephaly, a tendency to leptocephalia and to leptoprosopy, the bigoniac diameter almost equal to the minimum frontal diameter, leptorrhinism, a high and narrow ear succeed in characterizing this group.

114 141 144 As a whole these results agree with the few previous observations on the Uru and the Chipaya (Imbelloni's two Uru skulls; a few measurements by Posnansky), emphasizing the morphological unity of these two groups.